FE Week
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SFA demands subcontractor deals go online

Chris Henwood
@Chris_Henwood

Tough new rules forcing prime contractors to go public with information on their deals with providers are to be introduced by the Skills Funding Agency.

Regulations that will come into force from August will require primes to publish details of their subcontracting arrangements online.

The details, "as a minimum," will include the management fee charged by the prime, the services offered for the management fee and, where relevant, the reasons behind any differences in management fees.

An agency spokesperson said: "Since publishing last year's rules, we have been consulting the sector on how we ensure subcontracting is only undertaken where it is of direct benefit to learners and employers.



"Working closely with representatives from across the sector we have sought to strengthen the freedoms of providers in managing healthy supply chains.

"However, in doing so we have made clear in the new funding rules, the controls and assurances we expect providers to have in place."

The new rules will be introduced less than a year after an Ofsted probe uncovered primes charging management fees "as a way of generating income for doing little work".

The Ensuring Quality in Apprenticeships report highlighted how subcontractors felt they were getting "poor value for money" from management fees and revealed many primes were overcharging according to agency guidance.

And in June last year, FE Week told how primes appeared to take an average management fee of 23 per cent. Research from the agency suggested primes charged subcontractors more than £175m, based on allocations worth almost £760m.

But all deals could come under public scrutiny with the new rules dictating their details are published on a prime's website. The rules will also require primes to outline the reason for subcontracting and explain how the move will benefit the quality of teaching and learning.

The move toward openness was supported by the Association of Colleges (AoC), whose senior skills policy manager, Teresa Frith, said: "We support the idea that all providers are required to be open about how they determine what amount of funding they retain and full disclosure of what they have retained.

"This type of requirement will be of no consequence to most providers, who will probably find that they can continue sub-contracting business as usual."

She added: "In broader terms it must be remembered that colleges retain funds for a wide range of reasons, not simply managing sub-contractors. There can be other services provided such as sourcing students or delivering programme elements."

The new rules also "highly recommend" providers refer to the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) and AoC-developed Common Accord, and the Learning and Skills Improvement Service's good practice guide on supply chain management.

The accord and the good practice guide aim to tackle inadequate due diligence checks by primes and whether their management fee represents value for money.

Graham Hoyle, AELP chief executive, said: "I am confident the accord and the good practice guide will help providers and colleges minimise the risk within supply chains, ensuring they offer high-quality provision for employers and learners.

"If the good practice exemplified in the guide is embedded in supply chains throughout the post-16 learning and skills sector, then the government and its agencies can be confident they are getting good value from the public purse."



Ryan Carpenter, BTec National Diploma in hospitality supervision year two

Chef award on the menu at Bournemouth & Poole

Campus roundup pages 10 to 13

Charter status logo finalists











See pages 8 & 9

Edition 55

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Top careers advice tweets:

@LucySweetman
So @bisgovuk is on about increased apprenticeships, PM mentioned it y'day. How many went to 16 year olds? How many to 19+ already in work?

@stirlingwood
So, just to avoid confusion, <19 Apprenticeships ARE down?

@NIACEhq
Much to welcome in Statistical First Release but it's important to understand the detail behind the headline findings

@ProfCaryCooper
Many concerns abt youth unemployment @ Davos, but have not heard many solutions other than apprenticeships Need a systemic approach by biz&govt

@stewartsegal
Apprenticeship success rate still excellent despite the slight reduction. First impact of minimum duration?

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Alarm as apprentice figures fall

Chris Henwood
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The number of under 19 apprenticeships has fallen for the first time in three years — and figures indicate the slide could get worse.

The latest Statistical First Release shows there were 1,800 fewer 16 to 18-year-old apprenticeship starts last year than in 2010/11 – a 1.4 per cent fall.

And provisional figures for the first quarter of the current year show a 7.4 per cent decline on last year already.

FE Minister Matthew Hancock (pictured) told *FE Week* he was looking at the fall "closely" and said a number of factors could be behind the issue, including the government's attempt to tackle "poor provision".

The fall comes amid the backdrop of a boom in the overall number of apprenticeship stats — from 457,200 in 2010/11 to 520,600 last year.

However, the picture for under 19s was 131,700 in 2010/11 versus 129,900 last year.

And, like-for-like provisional figures for the first half of 2011/12 and the current year, were 53,700 versus 49,700, respectively.

The collapse can be traced back to the second half of 2011/12 when 16 to 18 apprenticeships plummeted 13.48 per cent to 46,200.

However, Mr Hancock said the government was taking action and the planned introduction of traineeships would help the age group.

But he declined to "rule in or rule out" a review of the Coalition's three-year policy, introduced from 2011/12, of cutting the national funding rate for 16 to 18 apprenticeships by 2 per cent a-year.

"I am looking at the 16 to 18 numbers closely, but they are part of an overall picture of growth in apprenticeships," said Mr Hancock.

Nevertheless, Shadow FE Minister Gordon Marsden remained critical of the government over the figures.

"The continuing drop is deeply alarming and now appears to be a pattern," he said.

"The government's failure so far to have a proper pre-apprenticeship training route is costing young people, not least those in the NEETs [not in education, employment or training] category, dear."

Association of Colleges assistant chief executive Julian Gravatt said: "It is clearly worrying that the number of 16 to 18-year-old apprentices is down. The reduction in the number of 18-year-olds and the state of the economy have a role, but we will continue to work with government to promote the scheme and develop the new traineeships route."

Graham Hoyle, Association of Employment and Learning Providers chief executive, said: "The recession has been a tough for apprenticeship recruitment for under 19s and this is why traineeships are needed to equip school leavers with employability and functional skills."

A government spokesperson said the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) would be stepping up its marketing campaign to increase job opportunities among young people.

"Our priority is to increase the number of apprenticeship being offered by employers and to improve the readiness of young people who apply and succeed in securing them," she said.

David Way, chief executive of NAS, said: "Our immediate and continuing focus is on growing apprenticeships at 16 to 18, supported by the apprenticeship grant for employers to recruit a young apprentice and we are putting in place additional measures, including a marketing campaign targeted at employers and young people."

Merger plan investigated

The proposed merger of two colleges is being investigated over concerns they may not have followed correct procedure, *FE Week* can reveal.

A six-week formal consultation on the plans for Birmingham Metropolitan College and Stourbridge College launched on January 18.

The merger would see the 12,500-student Stourbridge College dissolve on May 31 with its property, rights and liabilities then transferring to Birmingham Metropolitan, which had more than 26,000 learners two years ago.

A statement on the Birmingham college's website said they were planning to merge "to become one of the largest and most significant further education providers in the country."

However, a Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) probe has been launched amid concerns the merger could be going ahead too quickly.

The consultation report is due out by March 20 — the day before governors were expected to rule on the proposals.

The consultation document says a draft order for the dissolution of Stourbridge College would come out the same day as the governors' decision, with merger taking place on June 1.

A BIS spokesperson said: "We aware of the consultation and are investigating to establish if appropriate processes have been followed."

A joint statement from the colleges said: "We reject any suggestion due process has not been followed in taking forward the merger process. The processes required by law have been, and are being, strictly observed.

"Views expressed in the consultation will be fully considered in due course and those views and the corporations' response published."

The Birmingham college achieved a good grading from Ofsted in March 2011 while Stourbridge got the same grade a fortnight ago.

Sackings protest hits college open day

Eleanor Radford
@EleanorRadford

A Union said up to 100 members protested during a Midland college's open day as a "last resort" over the sacking of four lecturers.

University and College Union (UCU) members marched through Halesowen, near Birmingham, waving banners and chanting support for David Muritu and three others — all formerly Halesowen College maths lecturers and active UCU members.

The college said they dismissed Mr Muritu, the union's branch secretary, before Christmas because of his students' poor results but the UCU claim the former maths lecturer was "treated unfairly" labelling it an "attack" on union workers.

A spokesperson for UCU told FE Week: "Any form of action is always a last resort and not entered into lightly. Such is the college's behaviour that members felt they had little option but to use the day to highlight the unfair treatment of Dave and the three other union members.

"We would rather the dispute, like any other, can be resolved without the need to resort to these types of action."

Halesowen College declined to comment on the protest, which happened on January 25 and followed a picket on the same issue earlier in the month. It justified Mr Muritu's dismissal saying they had provided the lecturer "intensive support" over a period of three years.

"However, David Muritu had failed to make any improvement in student attainment, and indeed the pass rate declined further over the period," said a Halesowen College spokesperson.

"One student group which he highlighted in support of his case turned out to show that from 14 students 10 failed to pass, with all but one student attainting a pass at least one or two grades lower compared to their grades in other subjects."

"In addition, over the last three years his AS pass rates were generally some 15 per cent below the average pass rates across the College."

The UCU dismissed Halesowen College's justifications claiming only AS results had been used against him with no account of A-level results adding that one action plan had been put in place to support Mr Muritu but this was "abandoned" by management when the lecturer had to cover long-term sickness.

Barry Lovejoy, UCU's head of FE, spoke at Saturday's protest. He described Mr Muritu's sacking as "improper" and claimed Halesowen College seemed "determined to pick fights with UCU at every turn".



UCU protest at Halesowen College

"As every teacher knows, student attainment is affected by many factors besides teaching, such as prior educational experience, home background, the ability and motivation of the students, and the general educational environment and support provided by the college," he said. "The arbitrary and improper dismissal of teaching staff for the underachievement of students sets a worrying precedent."

A petition calling for Mr Muritu to be reinstated received 1,100 people. A counter-petition signed by about 150 college staff called for Saturday's protest not to take place.

Mr Muritu appealed but the decision was upheld at a hearing on January 24. The UCU said Mr Muritu was considering an employment tribunal.

Tax campaign taken to Treasury chief at Commons

Chris Henwood
@Chris_Henwood

The government has pledged to look into "correcting an anomaly" that sees colleges pay VAT while school sixth forms escape the charge.

Three colleges in Cambridge teamed up with local MP Dr Julian Huppert to put pressure on Treasury ministers over the issue that has been branded within the sector an "absurd discrepancy".

Cambridge Regional College along with Hill's Road Sixth Form College and Long Road Sixth Form College were behind Liberal Democrat Dr Huppert's questioning of chief secretary to the Treasury Danny Alexander MP in the House of Commons.

"Sixth form colleges and FE colleges like Hills Road and Long Road Sixth Form Colleges and Cambridge Regional College do excellent work, but face a very large VAT burden — some £300,000 for the sixth form colleges and well over £1m for Cambridge Regional College — that schools simply do not face, as well as being less well-funded than the schools sector," said Dr Huppert during House of Commons Treasury questions on Tuesday, January 29.

"Will the government agree to investigate whether this anomaly can be corrected so there is a level playing field for sixth form colleges and FE colleges?"

Fellow Liberal Democrat Mr Alexander said: "We are taking steps year-by-year to equalize the funding arrangements. We will clearly have to look at that again in the spending round that will happen in the first half of this year."

It comes a fortnight after Schools Minister David Laws told MPs: "I am sympathetic to concerns expressed about the different VAT treatment that sixth-form colleges receive from the government. I have asked officials to raise the matter with the Treasury and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs and to report back to me."

Anne Constantine, principal of Cambridge Regional College, said: "The thousands of students at Cambridge Regional College, Hills Road and Long Road Sixth Form Colleges will benefit from a reversal of this unjust policy."



From left: Dr Julian Huppert MP, Anne Constantine, Linda Sinclair and Chris Sherwin

Linda Sinclair, principal of Hill's Road Sixth Form College, said: "It is manifestly unfair to treat sixth form colleges less favourably than other state-funded schools and academies."

Chris Sherwin, principal of Long Road Sixth Form College, added: "Our VAT costs are in the region of £250,000 per year which would go a long way to helping us to maintain our very much older, but much-loved, set of buildings, and more importantly to maintain staffing levels."

Mark Bramwell, associate director of sixth form colleges at the Association of Colleges (AoC), said: "An AoC survey in 2011 estimated that this absurd VAT discrepancy was costing colleges £250m a year.

"This is a significant amount of money which would be best spent on teaching and learning, particularly at a time of funding constraints for colleges."

A spokesperson for the Sixth Form Colleges Forum said the VAT issue was just one example of the inequalities between colleges and schools that also included school and academy students being entitled to free school meals.

Mr Laws has told MPs the government was "currently looking at options for extending [free school meals] eligibility further across the 16-to-19 sector".

London colleges' decline

Chris Henwood
@Chris_Henwood

A London college that admitted success rates could have been exaggerated by up to 10 per cent two years ago has been hit with an Ofsted grade fall.

Croydon College was rated as in need of improvement, having been graded good following inspection in July 2009.

In 2011, the college's then new principal, Frances Wadsworth, revealed there could have been a practice of failing to report details of unsuccessful students to boost results and funding.

"Depending on the methodology employed, the effect on overall success rates might lie between 4 per cent and 10 per cent," she said in a report to governors. A college spokesperson later said the issue had been "rigorously addressed".

But it was visited again by Ofsted in December, resulting in the "requires improvement" grading.

It was also told to improve in the two subgradings of quality of teaching, learning and assessment; and effectiveness of leadership and management.

However, it was handed an "inadequate" grade for learner outcomes.

The report said: "Unreliable data in 2009/10 inflated apparent success rates to well above the national average for similar colleges.

"In reality, success rates were considerably lower. Accurate data for the following two years confirm that success rates are still too low, although they improved faster in 2011/12 than the average for other colleges.

"The number of students who remain on their programme is at the national average; however, too many students fail to gain the qualification they set out to achieve."

Nobody from the college was available for comment.

It was the second London college within a week to suffer an overall Ofsted grade fall from "good" to "requires improvement".

The 5,390-learner Richmond upon Thames College was also inspected in December, following a previous visit in January 2007.

It was told to improve for the three subgradings of quality of teaching, learning and assessment; effectiveness of leadership and management; and, outcomes for learners.

The Ofsted report said: "A significant number of [Richmond upon Thames] students do not make the progress they are capable of, particularly on vocational courses. Some teachers do not expect enough of their students when challenging them to fulfil their potential."

It added: "The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good enough and varies too much between, and within, curriculum areas."

The report was also critical of managers, saying they "do not use the feedback from students and other users to provide an accurate overview of what is good about the college and what requires improvement."

A college spokesperson declined to comment on the fall in grade specifically.

However, its principal, David Ansell, said he was "pleased" the report recognised overall success rates had improved in the last year "with 100 per cent pass rates in many A-level subjects and that many vocational courses are above the national average".

He added: "New arrangements to further improve teachers' professional practice are showing significant benefits in curriculum areas. In addition, the recent changes to the personal tutoring system are enabling teachers to focus solely on students' learning and progress."

College governors' chair Cathy Bird said: "All staff will now work together to ensure performance targets are met and that all students fulfil their potential."



Editor's comment

Deals to go online

Providers want freedoms and flexibilities to subcontract their funding.

They want to be trusted to self-regulate the management of 'high-risk' provision.

The SFA has said 'deal, but only if you publish who, what, where, why and how much'. Now that's transparency.

If ever there was a carrot and stick approach to FE policy, then this is it.

It's also very experimental, and some may object to publishing commercially sensitive information.

Importantly however, the AoC and AELP support the new rules, so it's now up to providers to adhere to them.

Aside from greater transparency over management fees, perhaps the most important thing to be published on websites is 'why subcontract?'.

How many would say: 'We subcontract to protect our SFA allocation'?

Answers please on an e-card to FE Week.

Nick Linford, editor

Correction

Picture captions – don't you just love 'em.

Many reporting hours a-week can be lost simply trying to find out who's who in a picture and where they're positioned ("is that the principal on the left or second from right?").

There are often also questions about who the person in the picture works for and what their job title is. And all that before we even cross the ages bridge.

How frustrating then when we go to all this effort to get it right, only to trample over our own style guide rules — no full stop at the end of caption, for example, job titles are not 'capped-up' and no semicolons.

See last week's campus round-up pages for all of the above and one or two more.

Have you spotted something wrong with this edition of *FE Week?*

If so, feel free to tell us about it, including the page number and story headline, and explain what the problem is. Email us at news@feweek.co.uk with Corrections in the subject line.



FE Guild countdown picks up pace

Rebecca Cooney

@AnyNameButBecky

The latest stage in the development of the proposed FE Guild is "going to be difficult" to complete in such a short pace of time, according to the independent chair of the guild's steering group.

A formal consultation will shortly begin, and will run until Monday, February 25, leaving providers who want to contribute just three weeks to respond.

David Hughes, chief executive of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, who chairs the steering group told *FE Week*: "I don't underestimate that it's going to be difficult and the time we've had to pull together the consultation document has also been really short. It would have been lovely to have another week, 10 days longer, but we haven't got that time.

"Right or wrong, the decision by government to announce the end of funding for the Learning and Skills Improvement Service has pushed the timetable very tight."

He added: "I don't think a 12-week consultation would have necessarily been better, but a six-week consultation might have been better than three or four."

Following the informal consultation, which ran online and through consultation events between November and January, Mr Hughes said he was hopeful of a strong response from the sector.

"I suspect it will take up two to three hours of somebody's time but I think it's an important issue so I think a lot of people will take that time and make that effort," he said.

"I was surprised we got more than 400 responses to the small online consultation – I didn't expect to get many as it was around Christmas time, nobody really knew what the guild was, and there wasn't really a proposition for people to respond to."

Many respondents to the initial consultation raised questions about what the remit of the guild would be, and 42 per cent admitted they were unsure until they knew more.

Mr Hughes said he hoped the consultation document would provide clarification, but the guild would be shaped by the consultation and beyond.

He said: "The consultation isn't the end of it, it's to establish what needs to go into the implementation plan, and part of that has to be saying 'how do we carry on engaging with people and properly understanding what people want through the life of the guild?'

"If the guild gets established it will want to carry on refreshing its understanding and meeting the needs of the sector so we think the consultation is really a chance for hundreds of people to come and give their views."

He added: "When I started out just two and half months ago I wasn't convinced it was necessarily the right thing, but now I'm more and more convinced we need something and that there's a gap which needs to be filled, and I'm more and more convinced there's a will to make it work among people who have engaged so far."

And with just three weeks for the consultation, Mr Hughes called for input. He said: "I hope we get people being realistic about engaging with the document, trying to understand what we're suggesting and being constructive with their feedback."

Visit www.feguild.info for more details.

Comments

Plea for Ofsted to inspect school advice

Expecting schools to deliver impartial careers advice is neither unfair or unrealistic. In answer to Nick's 'what would you need to scrap' question, the report cites evidence which says that schools are being asked to invest in IAG services worth about £25,000 which they got for free last year so you'd probably need to sack a teacher or something. It is an outrage that no additional funding for this has gone to schools or LAs.

Checking to see if schools are indeed procuring these services shouldn't be difficult to police – but it's the quality of these IAG providers that concerns me.

I hope the occupational standards are up to scratch and there's some kind of professional registration system up and running. The issue here is as much about the quality of information as its availability.

Shane Chowen

I remember our school careers bod telling my sister she'd never amount to anything and she'd probably end up 'working on a supermarket checkout'. Very helpful!! Luckily she had the foresight to ignore him and believe in herself and apply for a College course and then went on to university. She is now a HE lecturer but she might not have been if she'd taken his advice!

Marguerite Hogg

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FE Week profile

Kenneth Baker ~ his story

Eleanor Radford
@Eleanor_Radford

Baron Baker of Dorking, author of 14-18: A Vision for Secondary Education, talks to *FE Week*

"I was once depicted as a lion," beams former education secretary Lord Baker on his appearances in satire, most notably on TV show Spitting Image.

"Occasionally I appeared as an eagle, then an asp, a snail and of course a slug, but my very favourite was as a Cheshire cat because as the cat disappeared, all that was left was a smile and I was always seen as a very cheerful minister.

"It doesn't matter, though, you haven't got to be worried how you're going to be caricatured — strong personalities don't worry about that."

Born in Newport, South Wales, the son of a civil servant, Lord Baker was educated at the former Hampton Grammar School and graduated from Oxford with a law degree before carrying out National Service.

He worked for Royal Dutch Shell before being elected a member of Parliament in 1968, eventually becoming secretary of state for education in Margaret Thatcher's cabinet.

Now, aged 78, the father of the national curriculum, Sats, league tables, as well as grant-maintained schools and city technology colleges has pushed the idea for another huge educational reform.

The Tory grandee has championed specialisation at the age of 14 in his latest book, 14-18: A Vision for Secondary Education. Primary school should end at nine followed by a stint at middle school before assessment at 14 when he believes the national curriculum should end and instead one of four pathways should be taken in technical, academic, arts and sports or a "career course", specialising in areas such as plumbing and catering.

So why does he feel so strongly about vocational opportunities?

"I always enjoyed practical learning," says the grandfather-of-six.

"I went to a good grammar school but all I remember is two hours of carpentry we had each week and I think I could still just about manage making a dove tail joint now.

"Perhaps it's in my blood — my grandfather was a carpenter and my father liked making things with his hands. I really believe young people can learn while doing things and working together as a team — if you're just sat in a class studying for exams you're not really going to learn that much."

But why has the retired politician laid out his ideas now 20 years after leaving frontline politics?

"I've always hankered for a change at 14. You've got to ask yourself why are there exams at 11 which is too young, and why 16? When I was education secretary I changed so much I couldn't change that as well, I really couldn't.

"Five years ago my old friend Ron Dearing and I both decided the one thing missing was technical schools — we had them in 1945, so we reinvented a model which we then sold to Lord Adonis [the then education minister for Labour]."

University technical colleges (UTCs) were born and with five already open, 12 due to open this year, 15 in 2014, and a further 21 in the pipeline, they are growing rapidly.

"The JCB academy in Stafford did not have a single not in employment or education (NEET) leaver last year," he says, claiming their winning formula is an employer-led and university-supported approach that provides a working day from 8.30am to 5pm for five eight-week terms. The terms mean that over a four-year period the students gain an extra teaching year.

This instils a "sense of maturity" in students who are dressed for the boardroom and which, he says, will see "truancy and disruption virtually disappear".

"I don't think I have much more of a career ahead at my age, but I hope by introducing this book and the UTC movement I have changed things significantly for the better," he says.

> "Margaret Thatcher was vilified, but she couldn't care a fig for it"

"I thought that when I brought in the changes in the 80s but there's no question about that as the national curriculum, testing and league tables, have led to others following on and improving it further.

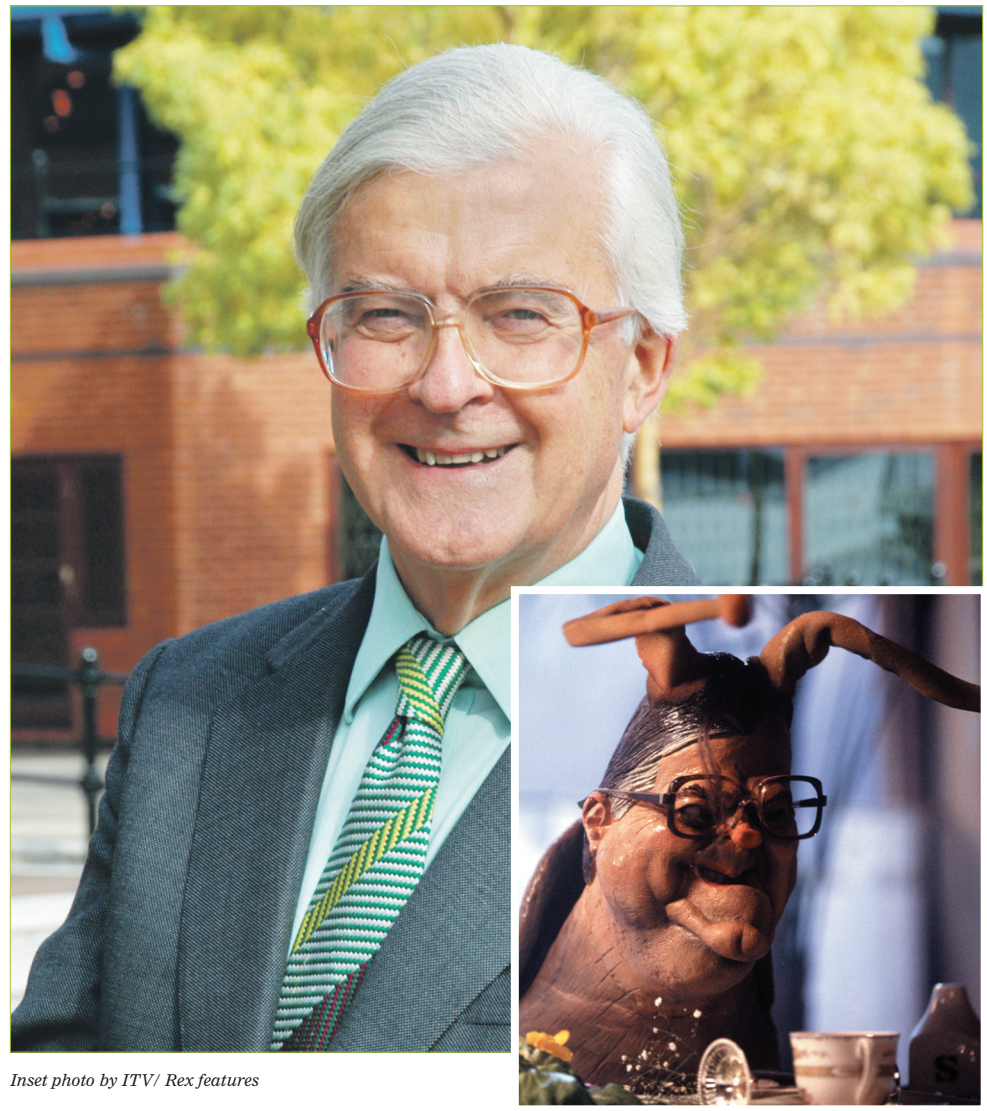
"I really think I'm trying to chart a different way forward for millions of our young people. I hope I've shown people the way it can go and then it's up to others to pick up the baton and continue."

Despite his fight for a practical education Lord Baker, who is married to Mary and has three grown-up children (two daughters and a son), has proved himself as more an academic with books published on history and satire.

"I've always loved English and it's enriched my life — you don't just have to think of a job, it should be about all the things that make a happy life," he says.

"The best teachers pass on the love of their subject like a virus, they inject it into you. It doesn't matter what subject it is and I was lucky enough to have two teachers who did that in English and history — they inspired me and generated in me an enormous love of the subject."

He says his lifelong passion for education came from within his family with an Irish grandmother, his wife, and several aunts and great aunts all working as teachers.



Inset photo by ITV/ Rex features

"I think the Baker family rose up through the education ladder," he says.

"All my family love reading and were very well educated — all my children went to universities — Scottish universities like their mother. They were more on the artistic and creative side."

Reflecting on his heyday in politics he says: "I was very lucky to be one of the generation at the high table of politics in the 1980s.

"It was an incredible decade, dominated by Margaret Thatcher. She changed everything — she saved Great Britain from decline and falling down. She transformed the national spirit, bought about privatisation, sold off council houses, approved education reforms, won the Falklands. It was a wonderful time to be in politics- the most exciting time since the war.

"I'd liked to have served in Churchill's cabinet during the war but it was also wonderful to serve in Margaret's cabinet."

Harking back to Spitting Image's rubber parody puppets of the 1980s, he reflects: "Margaret Thatcher was vilified, but she couldn't care a fig for it — it didn't matter.

"Others that did worry like John Major and David Steel let it eat into their soul but you mustn't let that happen — you can't let the cartoonist win and that won't happen if you're confident on what you've done, your character and the way you behave."

Despite turning on the popular Sunday night show for its humour in the 1990s, when he branded it "cruel," Lord Baker's love of political satire lives on in his collection 18th and 19th Century caricatures.

"I love satire and every politician would love to appear in a cartoon. Most MPs in the House of Commons today will probably never appear in a national cartoon because they haven't arrived," he says.

"Once you've appeared in a cartoon nationally, you've arrived."

It's a personal thing

What's your favourite book?
Bleak House by Charles Dickens

What did you want to be when you were younger?
Older

What do you do to switch off from work?
I like to go to the theatre and cinema. I read and write and like spending time with my wife and family but I don't relax too much — you will fall off the perch.

If you could invite anyone to a dinner party, living or dead, who would it be?
Mary, my wife, Charles Dickens, Sydney Smith, Ted Hughes, Queen Elizabeth I and Josiah Wedgwood. And Winston Chruchill, but he would come for lunch

What would your super power be?
To age comfortably

FE Week Experts

Government response 'frustrates'

The government last week published its response to the Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee report on apprenticeships. Committee chair Adrian Bailey MP examines the response.



Apprenticeships can play a pivotal role in creating the skilled workforce necessary for economic growth.

I welcome the government's agreement with this main thrust of our report.

The Richard Review came out shortly after our report and largely supports our findings especially on the issue of quality versus quantity.

I am pleased the government agrees that quality is the key for the apprenticeship programme going forward.

The government has gone some way to simplifying and strengthening the delivery system.

However, in response to our call for further work they cite two reviews underway. Action is needed now, not further reviews.

The basic flaw in the response is the government's failure to recognise that if it wants a skills agenda to realise its stated objective of 'balancing' the economy with more vocational skills then it must take meaningful steps to give vocational training parity of esteem with higher education.

> "We were shocked to hear evidence of the government wasting money"

The select committee drew upon the experiences of apprentices to make recommendations designed to change the culture in our schools that would encourage a greater take-up of apprenticeships.

Apprentices reported that they had received no encouragement as their schools were preoccupied with getting students into universities.

Apprenticeships are a viable and attractive path to a successful career and this should be reflected in the culture of our schools.

I am therefore deeply disappointed the government has declined to require schools to publish 'apprenticeship entries' as well as the number of university places their students achieve, and call on it to reconsider the committee's recommendation.

Schools cannot be blamed for being preoccupied with university entrants if this is to be the only measure of their success.

The government also failed to take up our recommendation that a formal structure be set up to attach apprenticeships to public procurement contracts.

We understand the need to be flexible, however, we fail to believe that a structure cannot be found that retains flexibility, while also encouraging apprenticeships.

The government has promised to investigate best practice in local government contracts and we will watch this space closely.

During our inquiry, we were shocked to hear evidence of the government wasting money on training schemes that it could not quantify or ensure value for money.

This stemmed from firms being able to pay their share with 'in-kind' payments.

The regulator does not perform any value for money checks to assess the level of contribution nor, it would appear, was there any consideration as to the quality of the training provider when allocating public money.

In these straitened times, this is simply unacceptable.

We made specific recommendations to address these problems by placing an obligation on firms to quantify the value of their 'in-kind' payments and are frustrated by the refusal of the government to act on this.

We are pleased the government has agreed to consider the use of quality indicators when allocating money in future. We recommended that they do so and repeat that recommendation now. We will monitor carefully actions on this issue.

We are pleased, however, that the government has promised to consider whether it should use quality indicators when allocating money in the future.

High quality apprenticeships can provide the cornerstone of a thriving economy.

We are pleased that the government has recognised this in its response to our report.

We encourage it to now take the necessary action to turn recognition into reality.

The government has acknowledged the need to keep on reviewing and refreshing its strategy in this area.

My select committee will follow developments closely and take further action if needed.

Adrian Bailey MP, chair of the Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee

Fighting for quality careers advice in schools

A damning Education Select Committee report on the quality of careers guidance at schools, prompted FE Week editor Nick Linford to issue a rallying call for colleges to up their game in promoting their FE offer. David Walrond, who addressed the committee, has responded, explaining why he thinks the emphasis should remain on improving the advice given out by schools.



An element of the cheerfully provocative is often refreshing and, like all caricatures, Nick Linford's *FE Week* editor's column had a grain of truth in it — some colleges really are too prone to wishful thinking and even a little self-pity.

However, on the substantive points the piece gets it wrong.

First, it conflates "offering impartial careers advice" (a duty) with "promoting the competition" (an idiocy, clearly). They are two completely different things.

I do expect publicly-financed schools, charged with a public duty, to do the former. So does parliament. I suspect FE Week does, too.

I do agree schools would probably be very unlikely indeed to do the latter — but then I don't know anyone in their right mind who expects that of them.

> "Careers advice is a serious business, not a marketing wheeze"

The overwhelming evidence — from AoC surveys and much other research that has emanated from, for example, Careers England, the recent Commons Select Committee and from colleges themselves — is that huge numbers of learners in 11 to 18 schools are denied access to, and have very little understanding of, the full range of post-16 options on offer to them, and that very many 11 to 18 schools are instrumental in that.

The consequences are not just tough luck for a few whingeing colleges who simply need to roll with the punches, wise up and spend up on the marketing front.

The consequence is a situation that is completely unacceptable — one that perpetuates major inequalities of opportunity, and damages both the well-being and life chances of those individuals who then make wrong choices.

If you find that approach sentimental, then focus instead on the damage to the economy — potentially up to £28bn worth of damage, as reported elsewhere in FE Week [as stated to MPs by Dr Deirdre Hughes, chair of the National Careers Council].

Many of the proposed "new" alternative marketing tactics for colleges are remedial and compensatory.

They are already old, tired, and frankly a bit desperate.

Prospectuses and application forms just get binned. Local radio jingles cheerfully with the general merits of colleges.

Buses carry (almost routinely now) short marketing slogans and happy student faces. Radio and buses do not and cannot carry data on progression, work-placement and destinations, careers advice, course details.

Social media has some real potential for colleges including, of course, supporting teaching, training and learning (that stuff, it should be remembered, colleges do when they are not marketing, campaigning or wrestling with the latest funding cuts).

However, trying to interrupt student discussions on social media with serious careers guidance and work placement chat is viewed by most students as akin to your dad turning up at a party and saying 'it's home time'.

Independent and impartial careers advice about what and where to study post-16 is an absolute entitlement. It is a serious business, not a marketing wheeze.

In its absence, only those from families with existing social and cultural capital get to make the right choices.

The foolishness and injustice of this are now compounded by the new set of government post-16 performance tables, supposedly provided for young people to assist them in their choices, but which in reality ignore or devalue vocational qualifications, incentivise the delivery of the narrowest curriculum, and mask the underperformance of many school sixth forms.

We certainly have a post-16 market with much competition and more choice.

Colleges will be more than at home in this environment, providing that market is a genuinely open one, properly regulated, and informed by reliable information and performance data about all the different providers.

We simply do not have those things. The FE sector needs to fight for them. So does FE Week.

David Walrond, principal at Truro and Penwith College, Cornwall

FE Week Experts

Repositioning FE as a vital alternative

Big changes in the sector mean that FE is being challenged to meet new aspirations, but, says Lynne Sedgmore, if the sector takes its opportunity then further education could gain a reputation that it has never had before.

I am excited about speaking at the Education Innovation conference next month and look forward to robust debate.

From the FE Guild to radical changes in study programmes, from international growth to strategic leadership in our communities, we as a sector are being challenged and encouraged to come up with detailed answers and innovative solutions to broad aspirations being set out by the Coalition.

If we choose to grasp the nettle, then it seems to me the role, mission and reputation of FE within our society as a whole could be enhanced in a way we have never before known.

Among the many opportunities being offered up, there is one we must respond to with particular vigour.

I am talking about the opportunity of genuinely repositioning vocational learning as both worthwhile and vital to all — as important as academic study, and of ensuring that the unique skills of FE staff engaged in vocational teaching can influence for the better others in the educational world.

The work of the Commission on Adult Vocational Teaching and Learning is already doing much to set out the very broad range of skills required of individuals — both teachers and learners — in order for vocational education to succeed.

They confirm the important message that teachers must be dual professionals — equally skilled in pedagogy and industry awareness — able to command respect and plan learning in a way that encourages teamwork and complex problem-solving.

College staff are also talking on some of the biggest societal leadership challenges, through engagement with Local Enterprise Partnerships and employer ownership pilots and through work with local communities.

As the post-Heseltine agenda focuses on localism and devolved training, those in colleges must raise their game to ensure they are seen as vital hubs for their communities and can retain vital skills funding.

We can demonstrate the importance of FE colleges by celebrating our successes — just look at average college success rates and how the benchmarks have risen.

Look at the work of the Gazelle Group and the innovative ways in which entrepreneurship is being encouraged and developed among students.

Look at the fact that 80 per cent of University Technical College applications have an FE college as the main driving force behind them.

And look at colleges like Leeds and Bristol who are driving forces in the whole process of local economic planning, but who have sometimes had to fight to get a voice at the table.

I am not being complacent — we know we have a lot to do to bring the teaching of all up to the level of the most outstanding, but as a sector we are fully engaged in that work.

Colleges are investing heavily in quality improvement, organisations such as the 157 Group are using academic research to proffer theories and practices of continuing professional development that will enable outstanding teaching to thrive and nationally developments such as the Leadership Exchange and the work of the Gazelle Group are providing an example for all to follow.

Technology is essential. FE teachers are not only embracing new devices, but actively engaging with innovative delivery models — from 'flipping' the classroom or workshop to developing MOOCs (massive online open courses, for the uninitiated).

The cutting-edge equipment on offer in most FE settings is the envy of many and every day innovative teachers are finding new and exciting ways to engage with not just industry-specific technology but with this technology — to bring relevance to their learners for whom



the tablet and the smart phone are an extension of their very selves.

But what do we need to do differently on technology?

I have been in employment for long enough to know that adaptability to new technology is among the most important skills you need to have.

Vocational teaching and learning and FE colleges really are at the forefront of the country's battle to develop the skills to compete in a global economy.

Lynne Sedgmore, executive director of the 157 Group



What's keeping you awake at night?

Funding cuts, staff performance, new Ofsted inspections...the pressures on Colleges are almost too many to list.

And although every College is affected, each one is affected differently. So when you enlist outside help, it has to address your specific needs.

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Liz Hurst, Vice Principal Finance & Resources, Somerset College of Arts & Technology

AoC Create
For the sector by the sector

Brand new opportunity



From left: *FE Week* reporter Eleanor Radford looks at competition entries with Valerie Carpenter, Tony Rodgers and Chris Thompson, all from BIS, at government offices in Westminster

Eleanor Radford
@Eleanor_Radford

Five students have had their "eye-catching" logo designs shortlisted in a competition to find the best seal of approval for providers.

The Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) launched a contest for FE students to produce a graphic mark that best reflected "chartered status", a concept being developed by the government that would recognise top FE providers.

FE Minister Matthew Hancock will pick a winner from six designs created by Paayal Makdani, Jess Daly, Lisa Cassidy, Mimi Jones and Daniel Mountford, who had two entries selected.

> "Having students involved is important and could be powerful"

"I couldn't believe it and was shocked and surprised to be shortlisted, especially as it was a national competition," said graphic design student Daniel, 21 and from Newcastle-under-Lyme College.

"Obviously as a design student it's your ultimate aim to get your work out there and this is a great opportunity for that."

Daniel told *FE Week* he developed his blueprints over the course of a week and his favourite of the two was his turning arrow logo as he believed it best answered the brief which specified entries should reflect the theme of "moving forward".

Attracting around 130 entries, the competition was shortlisted by a judging panel made up of Susan Pember, director of FE and skills Investment at BIS, Joy Mercer, Association of Colleges policy director, Gemma Painter, NUS head of FE, Andy Gannon, 157 Group director of policy, PR and research, and Stephen Ram Kissun, marketing and membership manager of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers.

Mr Gannon said: "The logo needs to be clear and easy to recognise, while reflecting achievement and positive forward movement.

"It was hard to choose between the many designs submitted, but any of the shortlisted ones has the potential to represent something good for colleges and providers to be proud of."

The winning designer picks up an iPad and the chance their emblem could represent the chartered status brand.

Chris Thompson, deputy director for performance management at BIS, said: "We were absolutely delighted with the response.

"Students will be the main customers for the chartered status so we wanted something they could identify with — having them involved is important and could be powerful.

"We wanted something eye-catching that represented the idea of movement and were pleased with how well the students took this on-board."

Mr Hancock said the chartered status mark of quality was being developed as a "beacon to motivate improvement" and to "publicly mark success" so people knew a college was "excellent".

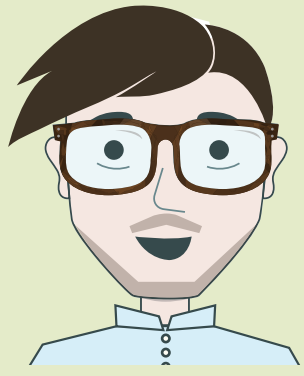
In documents about the development of the scheme BIS said the FE sector would "take ownership" of the chartered status process after around three years.

Providers would apply for chartered status and if they met certain criteria such as showing strong leadership and management and having excellent feedback from learners as well a programme of community activity endorsed by Local Enterprise Partnerships, they could use the term in reference to their title.

BIS put out a consultation on the chartered status concept attracting 50 responses described by Mr Thompson as "constructive and positive".

Designer Dan's top pick

FE Week **head designer Dan Duke (illustrated) offers his professional view as to why he likes Daniel Mountford's logo**



All of the shortlisted entries have a lot of potential but, for me, the clear leader is Daniel Mountford's turning arrow concept (below).

This logo best meets the requirements of the brief for a forward–moving and instantly recognisable design.

Arrows usually represent movement forwards and upwards, evoking aspiration — perfect for a logo used to distinguish training providers with chartered status from those without.

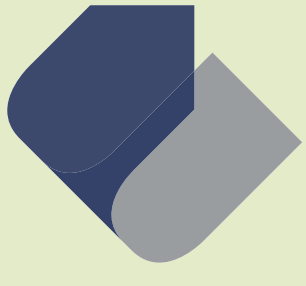
The transparency used in the logo gives it a dynamic feel and a sense of depth, creating an eye-catching brand. The simple, one–colour design makes the logo versatile and functional. This kind of brand will be used in a variety of applications and Daniel, has clearly taken this into consideration when planning the design.

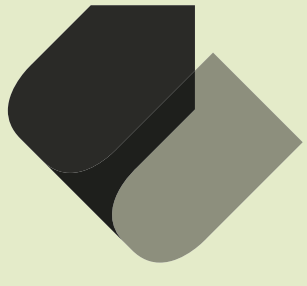
That's not to say the concept is perfect. One criticism is that the typography that sits alongside the mark could use a little care and attention, perhaps taking cues from Lisa Cassidy and Mimi Jones. Both their designs use friendlier fonts with a little more character.

Although colours are easy to change and are usually left until last in a project like this, it would have been nice to see Daniel's arrow concept in a few other colour options — something a little lighter and brighter perhaps, especially in a sector with a bit too much blue and grey.

For young designers it's impressive just to get this far so well done to all the shortlisted contestants and may the best brand win.

On top of an iPad, the competition winner will spend a day (fully paid) working with Dan Duke at the FE Week offices.







"The design was based on a rosette as a symbol of quality, which I then simplified. I like the way that people can look at it in different ways"

Jessica Daly, 16, from Sale, is a graphic design student at The Manchester College

CHARTERED TRAINING PROVIDER



"As a design student it's your ultimate aim to get your work out there and this is a great opportunity for that"

Daniel Mountford, 21, from Stoke-on-Trent, is a web and graphic design student at Newcastle-under-Lyme College

CHARTERED INSTITUTION

Chartered Institution



"I produced three designs, all based around three roads representing the students' journey. The circle symbolises students' growth, with the colour representing the sun setting as they progress towards their future"

Lisa Cassidy, 24, from Eccles, is a graphic design and advertising student at The Manchester College

CHARTERED STATUS



"The more competitions you enter the better as it gets you ready to work for clients, working to a deadline and working out what they want"

Mimi Jones, 21, from Shropshire, is a graphic design and creative photography student at Newcastle-Under-Lyme College

CHARTERED STATUS



"The idea of the diamond was to show quality and sophistication and that progression is infinite"

Paayal Makdani, 18, from Sale, is a graphic design student at The Manchester College

CHARTERED TRAINING PROVIDER

FE Week campus round-up

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From Left: Richard Ness, 18, who is doing an internship in conservation, and Alex Edmonds, 19, who wants to be a football coach

Valuable experience for vulnerable learners

Fifteen Hull College students will be offered supported internships in industries they want to work in through a pilot scheme for vulnerable students and those with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The scheme will combine real life experience in placements of students' choice with classroom-based study towards an OCN City & Guilds qualification in work skills.

Alex Edmonds, 19, who starts his internship this month, said: "I felt excited when I heard about the course, because I wanted a way to get into sports coaching, but I wasn't sure how to do it. Now I'm going to Soccer Sensations and I can't wait, I feel really good about it."

If the course is successful when the six-month internships end, similar schemes could be implemented nationally.

Claire Guynan, supported internship coordinator at Hull, said: "The pilot scheme offers a great balance between time with an employer and time in the college and because the students are vulnerable, or have additional learning support needs it's an opportunity they might not otherwise have had."

Students take the reins to help lecturer



From left: Stella Jelly, 19, Taylor Stephens, 16, Hollie Radford, Emily George, Chloe Gardener, all three 17, Jade Grant, 18, Martika Chambers, Jassie Berry, both 19, and Roxanne Woodman, 18

Equine students in Somerset are champing at the bit to help their lecturer go for gold in an international competition.

Norton Radstock College lecturer Dawn Watkins is managing Britain's tentpegging world cup team and has enlisted her students to stage a training event at the HorseWorld horse sanctuary in Bristol as part of their assessment.

Tentpegging involves galloping in a straight line with a sword or lance to hit wooden tent pegs on the floor.

Dawn said: "In their first week the students managed to get sponsorship from leading equestrian brand Mark Todd Clothing and have other companies expressing an interest.

"It is a discipline which none of them are familiar with so it is letting them learn about another sphere within the equine industry.

"They are going to have to organise the whole event including providing information for the riders, health and safety at the yard and will be doing all the ground work. They have been working really hard and have real enthusiasm."

In last year's world cup, the British team won silver, and Dawn is hoping this year, with her students' help, they will carry away a gold.

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Send your stories with pictures to news@feweek.co.uk including names, ages and course of students where applicable



The Mayor of Warrington Councillor Steve Wright with former Xpand student Natasha Bragg, 17

Getting young people back into employment

Youngsters who found their way into education, employment or training came in for praise from their local mayor.

Warrington's Councillor Steve Wright congratulated the students, who had participated in the Xpand Project at Warrington Collegiate.

And students who studied photography put their skills into practice to record the evening.

The project aims to help young people back into education and improve their job prospects by tailoring courses to their needs and interests.

Zoe Elvin, 18 and from Orford, said: "I am doing the film and photography course which has been a lot of fun and I have learned a lot. I now have plans to carry on with this and hopefully turn it into a career."

Many students are now looking to build on their success and have enrolled on courses at the college.

Project leader Pam Barrett said: "Many of these students face challenges in their own lives and to overcome these and gain a qualification is a fantastic achievement."



Jess Collins, 17, at Arley Hall

Best foot forward for dance performance

Performance and production students from Cheshire are sharing the spotlight with one of the county's finest stately homes as they transform it into a theatre.

More than 60 young people from Priestley College will produce contemporary dance and live music in different rooms of Arley Hall, near Northwich, on Thursday, February 14.

Audience members will be able to choose what they see as they wander between the rooms of the house, with performances taking place in the library, dining hall and up the ornate staircase.

Student Jess Collins, 17, said: "It is an amazing set in itself. We're hoping to bring it to life with some great music and performances."

The dances have been specially-choreographed for the event by performing arts students and production students have taken responsibility for managing and marketing the event.

Garry Fortune, general manager of the hall, which is owned by Lord and Lady Ashbrook, said: "We've not seen anything like this at Arley before and it will be a unique way to for people to see the hall."



From Left, Back: Ajmal Afridi 22, Katie Lennon 18, Tom Dodgson, 20, Sahdia Mughal 24, Dean Anderson and Sarah Raees, both 19. Middle: Ian Fleming, 54, Kelvin Chaudry, 37, tutor Steve Roberts and Rachel Whittington, 19. Front: tour guide Colin Meridith, tutor Darren Comer, Jessica Wild, 19

Students get the creeps to get creative

A group of brave young artists found out ghostly inspiration is no dead end when they took a historical walk through Rochdale's spooky past.

The Hopwood Hall College students were guided through Rochdale town centre by local actor Colin Meredith, who recounted spine-tingling tales of the ghostly Baum Rabbit, a 13th Century boggart — a shape-shifting creature — and houses haunted by a woman begging for her life.

They were looking for inspiration of the supernatural kind for a project investigating myths and legends for their foundation studies in art and design course.

Katie Lennon, 18 and from Milnrow, said: "I know these tales are urban myths but the detailed descriptions Colin gave us really brought the stories to life. I was starting to believe some of them.

"It's been great for my project and I'm looking forward to using some of the ghostly inspiration in my work."

Katie and her classmates have all applied to art and design courses at university and are creating work for their portfolios, which their tutors hope will be displayed at a local art gallery.



Top row from left: tutor Lisa Bramley, Alyson Mellor, 21, Gemma Bailey, 19, Daniela Fatt, 31, Kaydie Gwiazda, 19, Ania Zajaczkowska, 25, Samantha Wesley, 19, Zoe Smith, 22 and Isha Kapotra 19. Front: Hayley Stewart, 19, Rebecca Olley, Katrina Warford, and Lauren Trehern, all three 20

Saluting the armed forces with charity event

A night of live music, fashion and food organised by travel and tourism management students raised a £364 for armed forces men and women.

Dearne Valley College students organised the event as part of their assessment and donated the proceeds to Help for Heroes, which supports British armed forces personnel.

One of the students, Kaydie Gwiazda, said: "We chose the charity because it is close to many people's hearts, and we were pleased to not only reach our target of £300, but to exceed it."

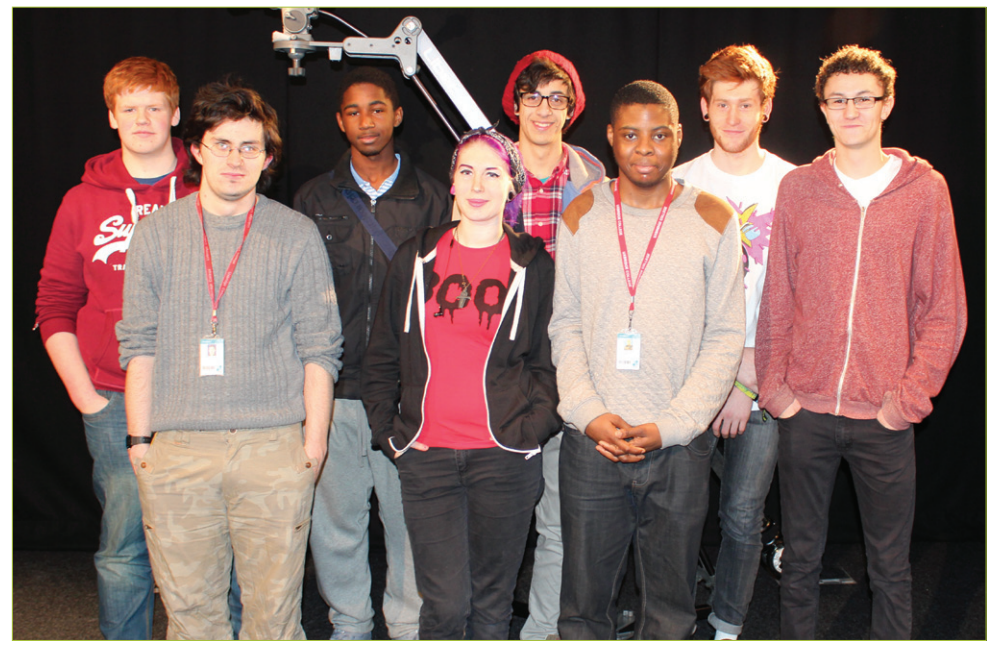
The students encountered a number of setbacks and last minute cancellations, but with some hasty planning managed to fill the empty slots.

"The event ran smoothly on the night and really demonstrated the advantages of working together as a team and having the communication in place to provide a successful event," added Kaydie.

Tutor Lisa Bramley said: "The evening went really well and the students worked brilliantly together.

"It was a successful night of fun showcasing a whole host of local talents and enterprises, while raising a good sum of money."

Uxbridge students have got talent



From Left: Tim Mizon,18, Andrew McClenning, 24, Rahim Marcelle, 16, Lizz Kingshott and Callum Anderson, both 17, Ashley Out, 18, Luke Dryden and Kial Kirlew, both 19

Creative media students showed off their own talent by filming and editing a hit music video with stars from TV show Britain's Got Talent.

The video, featuring former contestants on the show DJ Talent (Anthony Ghosh) and Stavros Flatley, attracted nearly 8,000 YouTube views in its first three days online.

Uxbridge College student Tim Mizon released the video under his Dry Line Productions label, after enlisting his classmates to help him and contacting Ghosh through Facebook.

Tim said: "I offered DJ Talent a fee-free opportunity to cut a media video, which would give me some experience. I had already dabbled in music videos and showed him examples of my work to date.

"Not only did he positively respond to my invitation, but he also invited Stavros Flatley to do a cameo."

The video for DJ Talent's track 'Tweet Me' was filmed in Uxbridge town centre, West London, attracting curious looks from shoppers.

Garth Twa, media lecturer, said: 'Tim and the entire cohort of media students have produced work that has been astounding.

"They have bright futures ahead of them, and have really done Uxbridge College proud."



Travel and tourism students with their back packs. Front: Keiron Hadley, 25. Back row from left: Demi Liston, 18, Bradley Such, 16, and Kelly Pearsall, 19

Ready, steady, Goa for jet-setting tourism students

Intrepid travel students from the West Midlands are jetting off to Goa to study the area's tourist industry and provide food and care for orphans.

The level three travel and tourism students from Sandwell College, near Birmingham, will stay in the Indian resort for a week, and will spend a day at the Mango Tree orphanage, preparing food parcels to give out in poverty-stricken areas.

Travel lecturer Julie Greenway said: "The students will do the tourist thing to see how the industry works in practice, but then they will be experiencing another side to the resort when they help those less fortunate than themselves, which may be quite a culture shock."

They will also take 25kg backpacks full of stationary and toiletries, donated by college staff and students, to give to children starting school as part of the Mango Tree's Bags4School project.

Thomas Cook airlines has allowed the extra luggage to be transported for free.

The learners will get to experience some of Goa's attractions, including elephant rides, visiting markets and beaches and cruising down the river.

FE Week campus round-up

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Students cast a spell with stage performance



Sixteen-year-olds Danielle Brookes and Shaun Murphy in action during a performance of Vinegar Tom

Young performers made their own kind of stage magic with their production of Caryl Churchill's Vinegar Tom.

The performing arts BTec students at South Cheshire College used contemporary music, voice, rhythm and dance to bring their first full length production to life.

College staff, students and members of the public were invited to watch the students' interpretation of this dark play which uses the death and destruction of the 17th Century Salem witch trials to explore fear, hatred and persecution in our own society.

Performing arts lecturer Caroline Fox said: "This was a fantastic opportunity for students to showcase their skills in front of a wider audience at college.

"This was the first full length assessed production for students on their course and they all enjoyed taking part."



From left: Simon Foulsham, territory manager from Maidstone, Steve Guice, regional sales manager from Warwick and Steve Ashfield, sales development manager from Bristol

Dulux reps get their hands dirty

Dulux workers brushed up on their knowledge and put their products into action with an intensive course in painting and decorating.

The 11 Dulux sales representatives and managers learned how to do it themselves on the five-day course delivered by Walsall College, enabling them to offer better customer advice.

Dulux regional sales manager Steve Guice said: "I've picked up some great tips on the course and now have a better understanding of our products and how they are used in real situations.

"I really enjoyed the course as it was a mixture of classroom lessons and applying this new knowledge on practical tasks."

The course covered surface preparation, wallpaper and paint application techniques and choosing the right tools and products for the job, and resulted in a City & Guilds level one qualification.

It may have other benefits, as Mr Guice added: "I've also been inspired to do some DIY projects in my own home that I've been putting off."



Luke Phillips, a specialised chef working at Chewton Glen Hotel, in Hampshire

World class catering on the coast

Culinary education has never tasted so good for young chefs in Dorset, after the world's leading chefs recognized their college's catering department as among the best in the world.

Bournemouth and Poole College is the first FE college and only the third college in Europe to receive the Recognition of Quality award from a global network of top cooks, the World Association of Chefs Societies.

The college currently has students on placements at some of London's top kitchens, including 12 at The Ritz, four at Claridges and three at Buckingham Palace.

Bournemouth and Poole college head of hospitality Adrian Martin said: "Our catering department has long been considered one of the best in the country and has won multiple awards and acclaim over the years. However this award is very different.

"We are all buzzing here. It is due to a huge amount of hard work on the staff's part but also to the work students have put in."

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Courageous student takes on big challenge



Outdoor activity student Kyleigh Hill plans to complete 30 challenges for her 30th birthday

A Welsh outdoor activity student is scaling new heights to celebrate her 30th birthday and raise money for charity at the same time.

Rather than throwing a party, Coleg Gwent student Kyleigh Hill will complete one challenge for every year of her life so far, raising £4,000 for The Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal, Wales Air Ambulance, Severn Area Rescue Association and the Victoria Cross Trust.

Kyleigh said: "When a friend suggested doing a challenge for each year of my life, I couldn't say no."

Kyleigh's challenges began on her birthday, when she started her task to climb all 24 of the Brecon Beacons — just one of her thirty quests which also include navigating the Wales coastal path, a skydive and a fire walk.

She added: "I've chosen a few things well within my capabilities, along with many more that will test me and require willpower and training for.

"My thoughts are that if it is easy to do, it isn't a challenge."

Kyleigh, from Ebbw Vale, hopes to become an outdoor activity instructor and work to rehabilitate injured service personnel.

Visit uk.virginmoneygiving.com/30-4-30 to sponsor Kyleigh.

Monstrous opportunity for graphic design students



CCAD illustration lecturer Tom Burton and student Blue Lunn, 17, from Saltburn, North Yorkshire

Young designers from Middlesbrough have been set the monstrous task of illustrating a local author's books for children.

The BTec graphic design students from Cleveland College of Art & Design (CCAD) have been enlisted by Kiran Kaur to bring the characters from her books, The Draught and Puddle in a Muddle, to life.

Kiran, 28, wrote the stories for her own daughter four years ago, and they lay in a drawer gathering dust until she posted them online last year.

She said: "The inspiration for my first book all stemmed from telling my daughter 'don't let the draught in' when she was coming in the house.

"She didn't really understand and was a bit scared about letting in a 'draught' as though it were some kind of monster."

This gave Kiran an idea for a story about an imaginary mischievous monster and the young girl who dreamed him up, Poppy.

To her surprise, US publishers who saw them on the internet snapped up the chance to publish them, but asked for pictures to accompany the text.

While searching for help to illustrate her work, Kiran stumbled upon a news story about a CCAD student whose artwork had been published and contacted the college.

"When Kiran got in touch I thought that this would be an excellent live brief for our students," said CCAD graphic design illustration lecturer Tom.

"The illustration pathway is a brand new course offered to our second year graphic design students and having just completed a project on creating monsters they were already in the right creative mindset."

Ten students were given a list of visual and physical characteristics of The Draught and Poppy and will research and sketch their ideas to give to Kiran who will pick her favourite of the students' illustrations this month.

She said: "I definitely made the right decision coming to CCAD. What I have seen so far has been amazing – the standard has been so high.

"I initially had a picture in mind of what I thought the characters would be like, but these young designers have really opened my mind to new possibilities and it is going to be an incredibly hard decision to choose just one winner."

The Draught is set for worldwide distribution this summer with the possibility of an animated series being developed in the future.

Illustration student Blue Lunn, 17, from Saltburn, said: "It is very exciting having such a high profile brief.

"It is quite difficult to come up with ideas that match the clients but we have been given a lot of freedom to put our own stamp on the work.

"Winning a competition and seeing your work published all over the world would be an incredible honour."



Burton and South Derbyshire College learner Usman Ahmed receiving a Diana Award from Ian Tetsill, regional director of debt finance at Barclays Capital

Learner recognised for volunteering efforts

A Derbyshire sign language student who helped kick off the FA's new national football centre has been honoured with an award in Princess Diana's memory.

Eighteen-year-old Usman Ahmed received the Diana award for his volunteering efforts after assisting the FA in opening its football centre, in Burton on Trent.

He had helped out at open evenings at his Burton and South Derbyshire College as well as a range of charity events during his travel and tourism studies before taking up sign language.

John Beaty, vice principal, said: "Usman was delighted to receive an award in recognition of his commitment to helping others and supporting the community.

"We are all extremely proud of Usman and hope this award will inspire others to volunteer in their colleges and communities."

The Diana award was established in 1999 and has celebrated 39,000 young people for their commitment to the community and improving the lives of others.

Learners step to it with dancing workshop



Emma Stansall, 17, performs in a dance workshop

Young dancers from Hampshire had the chance to be inspired by two dancers who wowed the world in the London 2012 Olympic opening ceremony.

The 30 A–level dance students at Barton Peveril College in Eastleigh, Hampshire, took part in a day of workshops with Jose Agudo and Andrej Petrovic, from award–winning Akram Khan dance company, which choreographed the section of dance which accompanied Emeli Sandé singing 'Abide With Me' at the ceremony.

Student Emma Stansall, 17, said: "I absolutely loved the intensity and pace of the day. In particular the rhythmic section was so clever, challenging and interesting."

Will Hodson, 18, who has been offered a place at the Northern School of Contemporary Dance, added: "The two dancers were brilliant fun. It was an amazing experience to work with such highly respected professionals."

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The closing date for applications is **5pm on Friday 15 February 2013**
NOCN is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion and we particularly want to hear from people from across the community, including people with a disability, people from black and ethnic communities, women and younger people who are able to make a real contribution to the charity and its learners.

More information about NOCN can be found at www.nocn.org.uk
To apply, please go to ***www.nocn.org.uk/about-us/job-vacancies***
Completed applications should be submitted to:
Sarah.Whitham@nocn.org.uk

www.nocn.org.uk

FE Week publication dates Feb 2013

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11 EDITION 56	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 EDITION 57	26	27	28			

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HOT NEWS FE Week ANALYSIS AND JOBS

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As Principal, you will be responsible for leading the College at this time of change across the sector, working with governors and senior management to deliver a strategy that embodies the vision, values and aspirations of the College. You will play a key role in the educational and employment outcomes in the local area and across the region. With a demonstrable track record of success in a leadership role, you will have gained significant experience of delivering excellence within a similarly complex organisation. This will be complemented by your professional credibility and strategic flair.

Download the full Job Application Pack and find details of how to apply at our website: www.riversidecollege.ac.uk. If you would like a confidential discussion on this post, please call our current Principal, Michael Sheehan, on 0151-257-2036 or michael.sheehan@riversidecollege.ac.uk. The closing date for applications is 12 noon on 15th February 2013. Interviews will be held from 6th to 8th March 2013. Any further enquiries should be addressed to the Clerk to the Governors on 0151-257-2034.

www.riversidecollege.ac.uk

Don't forget to check out our jobs board online at:

www.feweek.co.uk

HOT NEWS FE Week ANALYSIS AND JOBS

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North East Worcestershire College is an exciting place to be. With an annual turnover of c£20m, we provide a first class learning environment for some 7,500 students from the communities of North Worcestershire and South Birmingham, having recently invested over £40m in buildings and technology. At our Bromsgrove campus we have created superb facilities such as a Centre of Excellence for Arts and Technology, the Harley-Davidson training school and professional standard TV and recording studios. At our Redditch campus we have a modern site with a separate, impressive HE and Professional Centre as well as a purpose built Construction facility.

Yet the true value of the College lies in the passion of our people, our strong leadership and our commitment to providing the best possible learning outcomes for our students. Building on our current Good Ofsted rating and innovative ways of working, we aim to create an even better network of opportunity for the communities we serve.

In this newly created position you will play a pivotal role in our on-going journey towards excellence. You will lead on exemplary practices across all areas of teaching, learning and assessment. You will have responsibility for all delivery including the continued development of the Higher Education curriculum, our work with employers and our provision for adults and young people, as well as formulating the 14-19 strategies, ensuring that a flexible, innovative curriculum delivers the highest quality of provision.

With previous College-based experience at a strategic or senior level, you will have a proven track record in curriculum design and delivery and in teaching, learning and assessment. Together with a passion for innovative and engaging delivery, your proactive approach to leading on quality improvement will allow us to further enhance an already strong organisational reputation and your positive leadership of assessment processes will ensure that the College meets its annual performance targets and excels at inspection.

We are working in partnership with AoC Create on this important appointment. If you are interested in applying you can find all the details you should need at: www.aocrecruit.co.uk/northeastworcestershire

To arrange an informal discussion with our Principal John Callaghan, please contact Donna Baldwin on 01527 572501 or email dbaldwin@ne-worcs.ac.uk

Closing date for applications is Friday 22nd February 2013.

Final selection will be held in the College on Thursday 7th March and Friday 8th March 2013.

www.aocrecruit.co.uk/northeastworcestershire

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FE Week Sudoku challenge

					3		5	
				1	6			
4							8	9
9	3		1			5		8
5								1
6		8			7		2	3
7	9							2
			6	5				
	2		3					

Difficulty:
EASY

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

Solutions: Next week

			5		8			
	1		2		6		8	
3				4				2
2		9				8		4
			4		2			
1		5				3		7
6				8				1
	5		7		1		4	
			6		3			

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Last Week's solutions

1	8	9	3	6	5	7	2	4
6	2	7	1	4	9	8	3	5
4	3	5	2	7	8	6	1	9
2	6	8	5	9	7	3	4	1
5	9	4	6	3	1	2	7	8
7	1	3	4	8	2	9	5	6
3	7	1	8	5	6	4	9	2
9	5	6	7	2	4	1	8	3
8	4	2	9	1	3	5	6	7

Difficulty:
EASY

2	7	6	8	9	5	1	4	3
5	8	1	2	3	4	6	9	7
9	3	4	1	6	7	2	5	8
8	1	5	9	2	6	7	3	4
3	6	7	4	1	8	9	2	5
4	9	2	5	7	3	8	6	1
7	2	8	3	4	9	5	1	6
1	5	3	6	8	2	4	7	9
6	4	9	7	5	1	3	8	2

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

FE Week mini-mascot

Follow the adventures of *FE Week's* biggest and smallest fan!



"Mostly this week I've been waiting for daddy to come home with my tuk tuk"

You can also follow our *FE Week* mini-mascot on Twitter @daniellinford